

Mayor's Advisory Committee On Accessibility
April 21, 4:00-6:00 pm
City Hall, Room 12

MINUTES

Members Present: Ben Johnson, Cleary Buckley, Elaine Zimmerman, Sam Handy, Ralph Montefusco, Ron Redmond

Members Absent: Shelly Waterman, Michael Watson

Others Present: Bradley Stephenson, Jon Adams-Kollitz, Ted Wimpey, Maxwell Webster, Sandi Omanovic, Nate Besio

The meeting commenced at 4:07 pm.

Public Forum and Introductions

The Committee started by reviewing the last meeting. Discussion opened on Jazz Fest and what they do to accommodate people with disabilities. The committee discussed how Jazz Fest makes an effort to rent out the bathrooms in City Hall and how other organizations and events can utilize that model.

Bradley Stephenson gave an update on private businesses such as Michael Kehoe and Kountry Kart Deli, and how they may go about remodeling their entrances.

BTV Mall Update, Nate Wildfire

Nate Wildfire gave a quick overview of his work managing the public process for the BTV Mall redevelopment. Nate explained the process of how they took in roughly 4000 comments from the community, which they drafted into a memo and gave to the owner of the Mall. Wildfire visited the committee in February. After receiving their comments, Wildfire was happy to announce that the developers have made a commitment to accessibility. They pledge to follow all ADA laws and said that larger, more inclusive bathrooms were on their list as well.

Housing Project CVOEO, Ted Wimpey

Ted Wimpey spoke on the Fair Housing Project from the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity. It works toward building inclusive and vibrant communities in

Vermont, he said. Wimpey informed the committee of his idea to reform a Burlington Fair Housing Committee, as one had previously existed. The purpose is to explore ways to help people in protective classes ensure access to housing. Wimpey encouraged the committee to have a representative, as many victims of housing discrimination are people with disabilities.

ADA 25th Anniversary Event

There was a general discussion on the plans for the ADA event over the summer. The discussion opened with thoughts on where it should be located. Ideas for location included North Beach and Oakledge.

Nate Besio said that VCIL usually coordinates the event for a town that particularly could use improvement but is doing things differently for the 25th anniversary. He said they were thinking of hosting it in a few different towns to spread awareness and that they wanted to focus on promoting health. The committee thought a bike ride from North Beach to Oakledge would be ideal.

Aside from location, the committee also spoke on what the speaker agenda should look like. Ralph was concerned about having too many speakers because it could dull the message.

Discussion on VT Pub & Brewery Tour

Cleary, Sam, Sandi, and Maxwell gave a quick overview of their visit to Vermont Pub & Brewery. Maxwell explained how the owner approached him for advice and he referred him to the committee. The experience was positive, they said. They provided a few suggestions, along with a packet on the ADA law to the owner.

This led into a discussion of what the committee should do and what it can say when they are approached by business owners. The committee thought if they draft list of resources for people to use, that it may be helpful. This led to an open discussion on what the extent of the committee's power is and what their purpose is. Ralph suggested that the next meeting stay committed to organizing and that they take in no presentations without first organizing.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm.